

# AKIRA

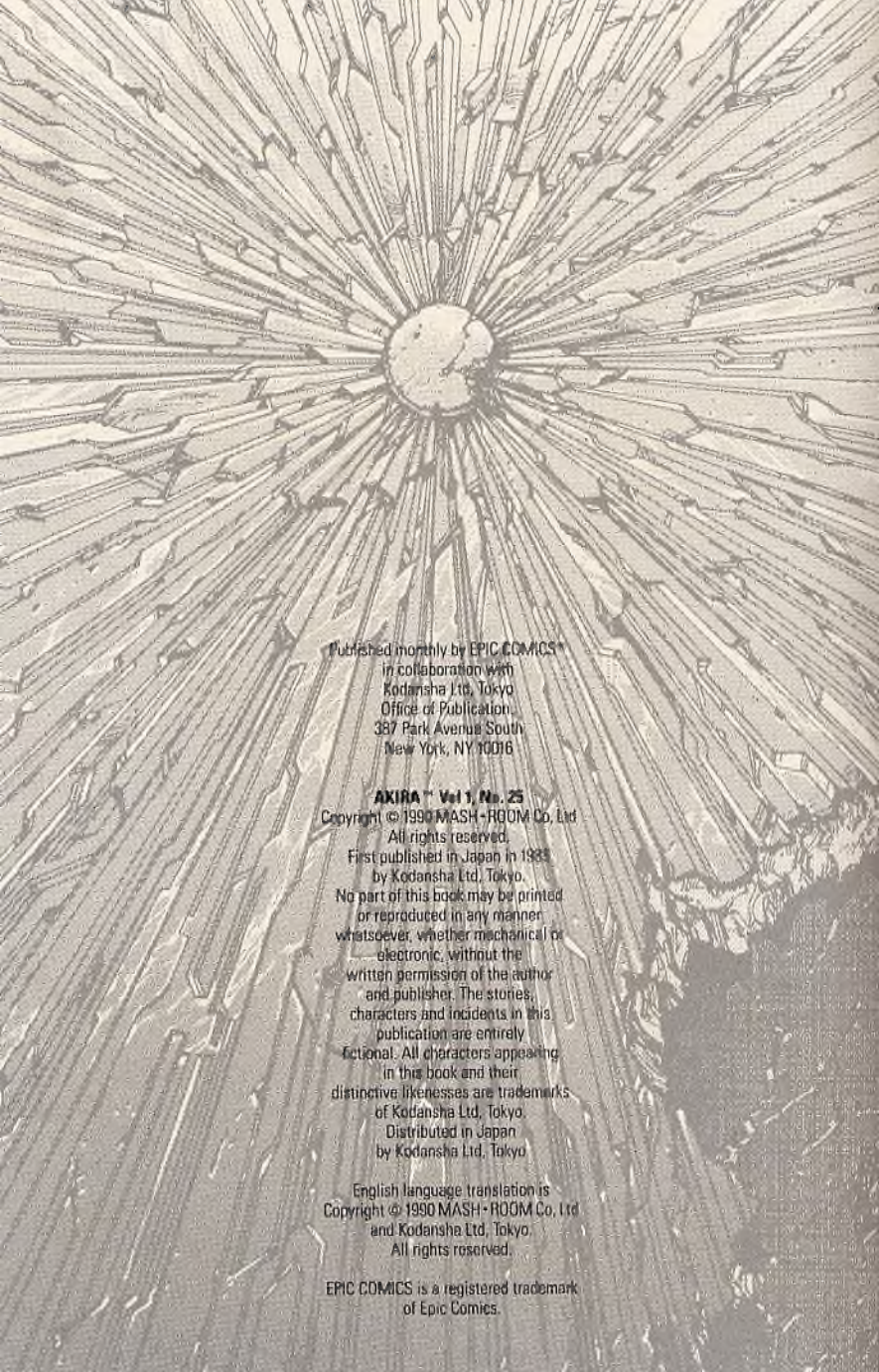
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VISION UNDERGROUND

# AKIRA

BY KATSUHIRO OTOMO

Chapter 25

## VISION UNDERGROUND

## WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

**T**wenty-thirty. The world hovers on the brink of World War IV. **Kaneda**, leader of a band of teenaged delinquents, leads his friends into a restricted area—the section of **Neo-Tokyo** known as the “old city”, where, thirty-eight years before, the first of the bombs fell.

As a result, **Kaneda** and his friend **Tetsuo** become entangled in a power struggle between a mysterious military and scientific organization led by the **Colonel** and an underground resistance group bent on putting a stop to the Colonel's activities. Members of the resistance include **Kay**, **Ryu**, and a formidable woman named **Chiyoko**. Among their superiors is the blind **Lady Miyako**—a powerful religious leader with strong precognitive gifts.

The **Colonel** has a number of psychic children under his control. **Takashi**, **Kiyoko**, and

**Masaru** are identified by numbers marked on their hands. **Number 28** is **Akira**, so powerful that since the war he has been suspended in cryogenic sleep.

The Colonel's staff conducts experiments which awaken tremendous telepathic potential in **Tetsuo**, who is redubbed **Number 41**. Able to shrug off the most serious injuries, **Tetsuo** goes on a killing spree, even attacking **Kaneda**. Followed by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, **Tetsuo** seeks out **Akira**, whose powers he fears may rival his own. In hibernation, Akira's power responds to Tetsuo's psychic energy. When **Tetsuo** reaches Akira's resting place, the cryogenic chamber cracks from within and Akira—dazed and docile from his long sleep—emerges.

The **Colonel** summons the powerful SOL military satellite and orders that its laser cannon be fired at **Tetsuo** and **Akira**. The two are separated by the blasts. **Akira** is saved by **Kay** and **Kaneda**, but the laser strikes Tetsuo's left arm. Afterward, **Neo-Tokyo** is placed in a state of military emergency, with “caretaker robots” patrolling the streets and



**Akira**



**The Colonel**



**Kai**



**Masaru**



keeping order.

**Akira** and the resistance fighters are cornered by the Colonel's troops, but all seems well when **Takashi** fondly greets **Akira**. Then **Nezu**, a former resistance leader who has betrayed his own side, arrives. He tries to kill **Akira**, but kills **Takashi** instead.

The trauma of **Takashi's** death galvanizes **Akira**. He fully awakens and unleashes a light blast powerful enough to devastate the entire city.

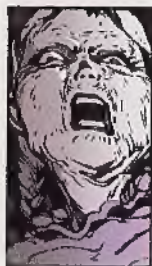
**Masaru** and **Kiyoko** sweep most of the people in the area upward. **Kaneda** is last seen vanishing toward the sky. Afterward, **Lady Miyako** opens her temple and offers shelter and comfort to those in need, gathering large groups of followers in the East.

**Neo-Tokyo** is completely cut off from the outside world. In the

western part of the city the **Great Tokyo Empire** is formed—a monarchy with **Akira** as the figurehead and **Tetsuo** as his prime minister. Together the pair use their powers, healing the sick, wielding control of the faithful, and organizing their subjects into fighting units that destroy caretaker robots and conquer military and medical relief parties sent from the outside world. The **Empire** is eventually infiltrated by teams of spies from the outside.

**Masaru** and **Kiyoko** are sick with withdrawal from the drug which augments and channels mental powers, and when **Kiyoko**, whose powers are precognitive, tells **Kay** to find **Number 19**, **Lady Miyako** asks that **Kay** bring the other psychics to her when they are well.

Tetsuo's men kill most of the



**Kiyoko**



**Kaori**



**Ryu**



**Seer**



spies from the outside, but their leader, **Lt. Yamada**, escapes when **Ryu** appears and leads him into the safety of an underground shelter. **Yamada** refuses to tell **Ryu** who has sent him. He does, however, reveal that Russia has conquered part of Japan, and that the American fear of **Akira** makes them reluctant to get involved.

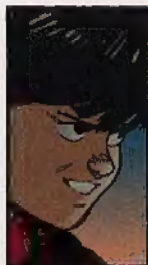
**Tetsuo** forces an orgy of sex and drugs on several young girls, only one of whom—**Kaori**—survives. Afterwards, **Tetsuo** looks into **Akira's** mind. He emerges a terrified wreck. When he recovers, he decides that **Lady Miyako** may be able to explain matters to him. Taking a dose of the power-enhancing medication, **Tetsuo** teleports to the temple of the religious leader. **Lady Miyako** recounts to him the experiments decades earlier which created the psychic children and reveals that the third World War was begun by a mental blast from **Akira**. She also warns **Tetsuo** that he alone can control **Akira's** near-inconceivable powers, but that he must first overcome his dependency on drugs. Disgusted and perplexed, **Tetsuo** returns to his stronghold. There he neglects his duties of state, concentrating

instead on trying to kick the habit.

**Kay** and **Chiyoko** try to move **Masaru** and **Kiyoko** to Lady Miyako's temple, but they are attacked by **Tetsuo's** followers, who escape with **Kiyoko**. **Chiyoko** rescues the girl, but is badly wounded. The two are brought to safety by the **Colonel**, who has been living in isolation. **Chiyoko**, delirious, tells the **Colonel** to take the child to the temple, where he'll also find **Masaru**.

**Ryu** and **Lt. Yamada** watch the **Empire** from hiding and are startled by an encounter with **Tetsuo**, whose withdrawal causes his powers to surge erratically. **Ryu** is even more startled when **Tetsuo** blurts out what his telepathy has shown him—that **Yamada** has come to assassinate **Akira**.

**Tetsuo's** lieutenant leads his army to Lady Miyako's temple, and they slaughter all in their path—monks, penitents and helpless refugees. They are however, thwarted by the power of Lady Miyako's psychically gifted monks and defeated when **Kay** captures their leader. **Lady Miyako** refuses to permit the execution of their enemies. **Tetsuo's** men depart alive, bitterly



Kaneda



Chiyoko



Lt. Yamada



Kay

swearing revenge. They return an hour later hungry for blood and victory.

Meanwhile, the **Colonel** has been wounded and nearly killed by soldiers of the **Empire**, but escapes alive. Shortly after **Tetsuo** returns to the shrine, maddened by the pain of withdrawal, the **Colonel** arrives and uses a remote control that enables him to fire a blast from the SOL satellite. **Tetsuo** unleashes a wave of devastating psychic power. During the mayhem this creates, **Kaneda** reappears, as if from nowhere.

**Tetsuo** takes another inner voyage, reliving both happy and painful episodes from his past, and seeing a vision of the double helix spiral that **Akira** constantly creates when he plays. Only **Kaori** is there to see **Tetsuo** return to the seat of the **Great Tokyo Empire** and bow down to his young lord. When their lieutenant returns, confesses his unauthorized attack on the shrine, and begs **Tetsuo** to help them overcome **Miyako**, **Tetsuo** refuses.

Aboard an American naval vessel, an international conclave of scientists assembles. They pool their knowledge of the **Akira** project, which they code-

name **Juvenile A**. Their data indicates that the effect of **Akira's** power is like that of the Big Bang—the force that created the universe—and that the most recent blast (**Tetsuo's**), lacked the scope and dimension of the earlier ones. They also theorize a link between the psychic blasts and the firing of SOL, over which the military is trying to regain control.

**Kai** leads **Kaneda** to a black market shop in the thieves' quarter of the city beyond **Miyako's** shrine. Leading the thieves is **Joker**, former leader of the **Clown** motorcycle gang, who were **Kaneda's** bitterest enemies. However, **Kaneda**, **Joker** and **Kai** agree to work together and avenge **Tetsuo's** crimes.

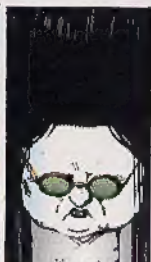
The **Colonel**, too, is after **Tetsuo**, blaming himself for the creation of what could turn out to be another **Akira**. **Kay** badgers him, hoping to make him reveal **Chiyoko's** whereabouts. The **Colonel** gives **Kay** a chance to join him, and the pair leave the shrine together. **Lady Miyako** is irate when she learns of this, and sends for **Kaneda**, imploring him to return with her "beloved" daughter."



Tetsuo



Tetsuo's Aide



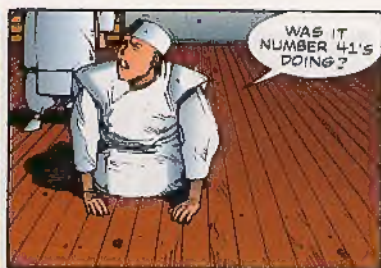
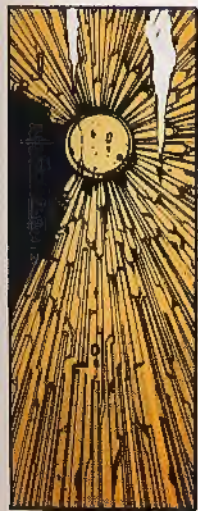
Lady Miyako



Joker









FIRST YOU SENT  
FOR ME, AND NOW  
YOU'RE TELLING ME  
TO STAY BACK? I  
DON'T HAVE TO  
TAKE THAT SHIT!



THANK YOU  
FOR BRINGING  
H.M.!

HUH?



LADY  
MIYAKO!

YOU MAY  
LEAVE US  
NOW.

THE WICKED OLD  
WITCH CAME OUT  
OF HIDING!



MY REQUEST IS A  
SIMPLE ONE. I  
WANT YOU TO LOOK  
FOR KAY



KAY'S NONE OF  
YOUR BUSINESS.  
IF I WANT HER,  
THEN I'LL GO  
AND FIND  
HER!



OF  
COURSE YOU  
WILL... BUT ..

...SHE'S AS  
PRECIOUS TO ME  
AS THOUGH SHE  
WERE MY OWN  
DAUGHTER

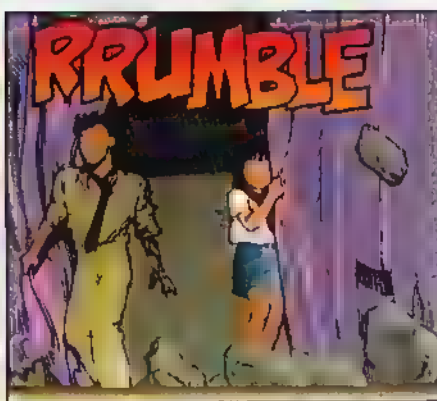
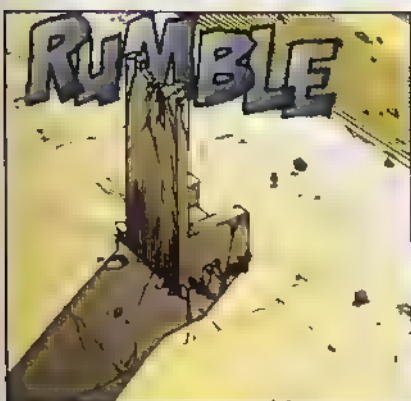
I BEG  
OF YOU  
TO  
BRING  
HER  
BACK.

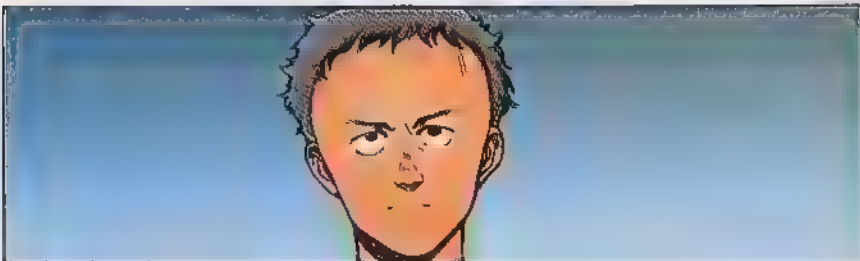
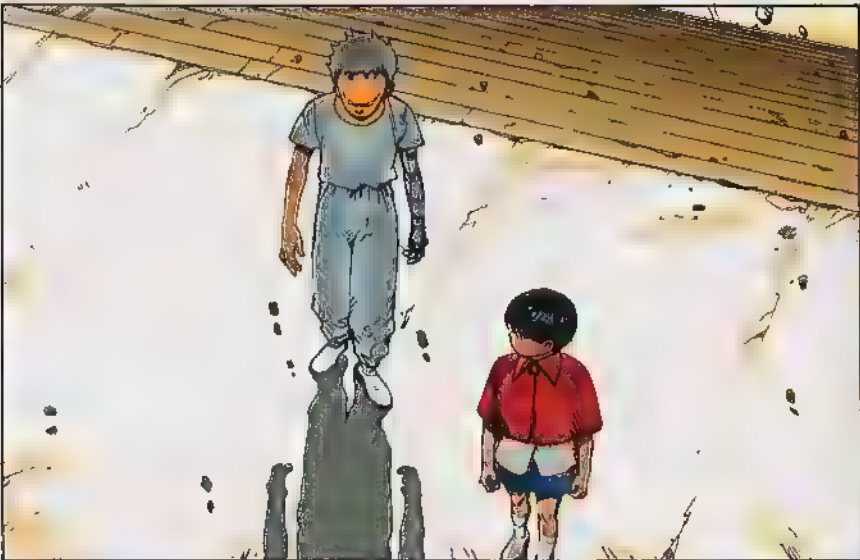
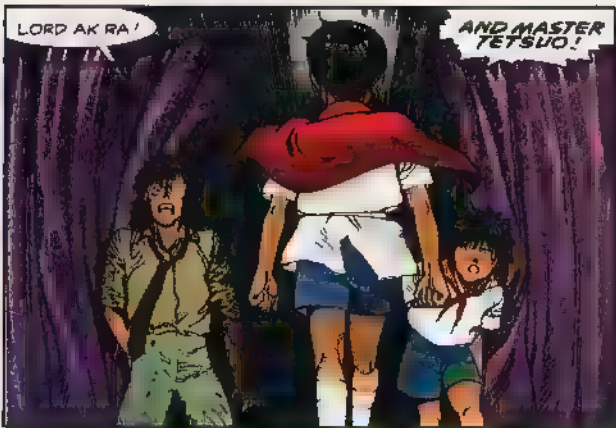


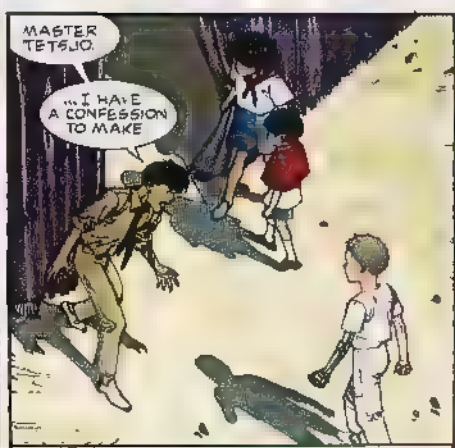
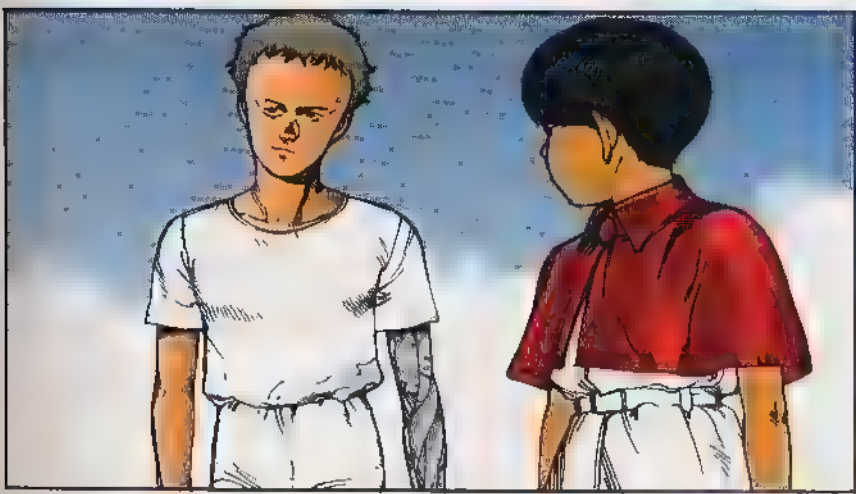
PRECIOUS  
DAUGHTER...













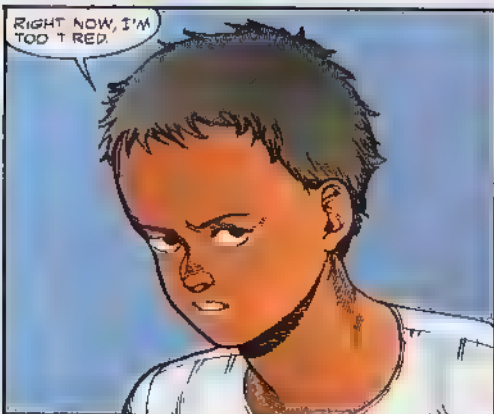


WITHOUT TELLING YOU OR LORD AKIRA, I CALLED TOGETHER OUR ARMY AND LED IT AGAINST MIYAKO. ALL OUR NUMBERS...

...AGAINST HER FOLLOWERS BUT THE REFUGEES CAME TO HER A.D.



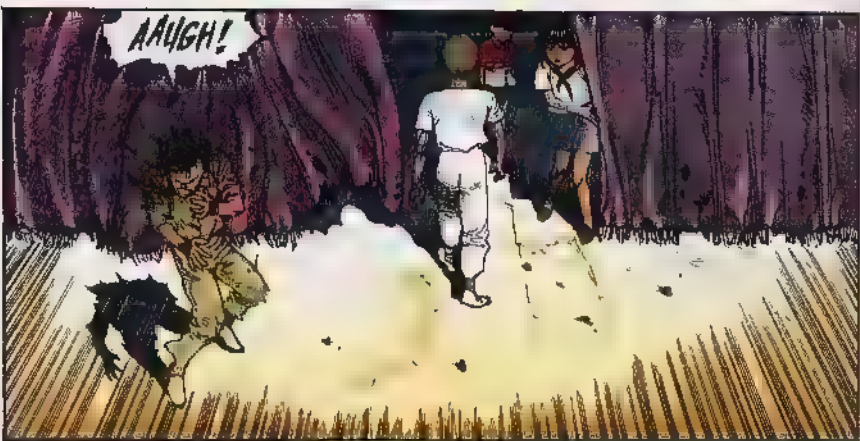
AND SOME OF HER PRIESTS HAVE THE POWER. WE DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH. PLEASE MASTER TETSUO! YOU'VE GOT TO HELP US.



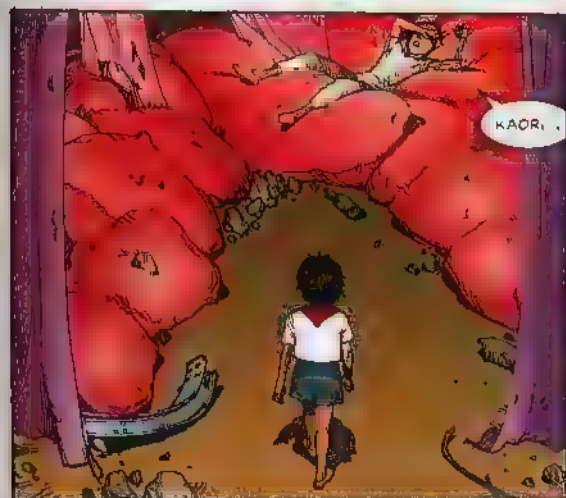
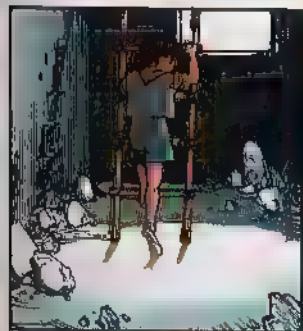
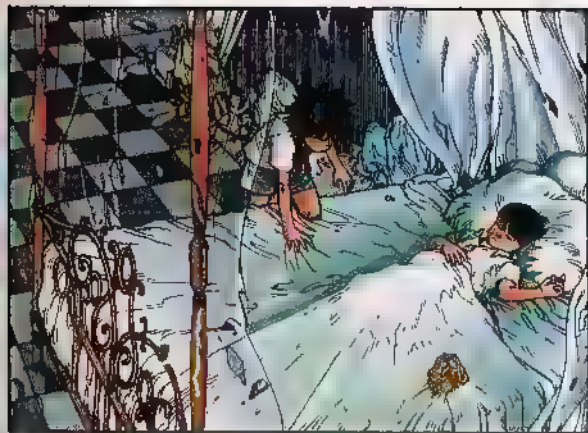
RIGHT NOW, I'M TOO TRED.



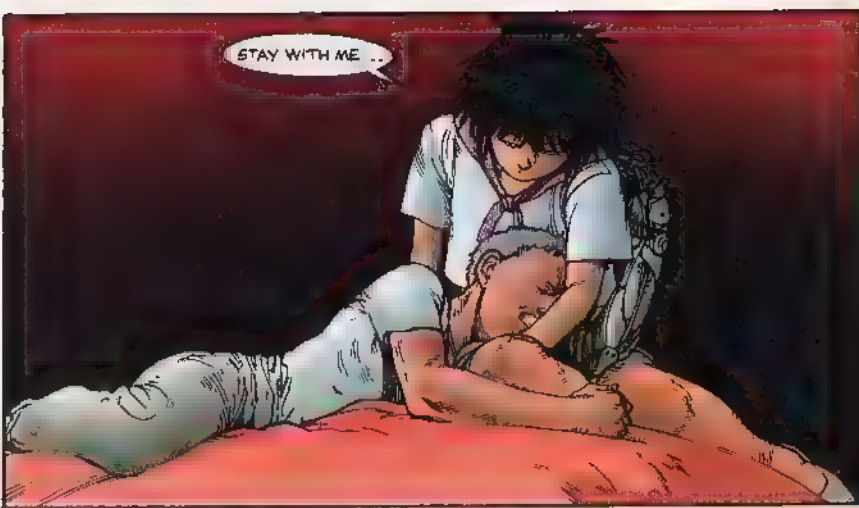
BUT THINGS CAN'T STAY AS THEY ARE!



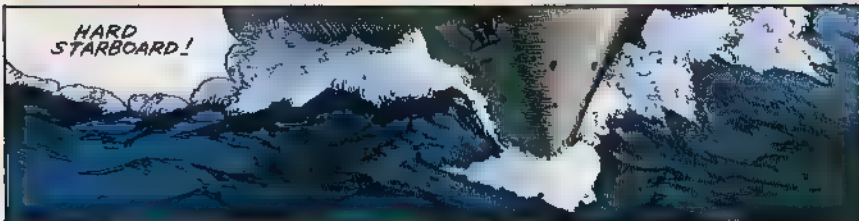
AAUGH!



STAY WITH ME ..

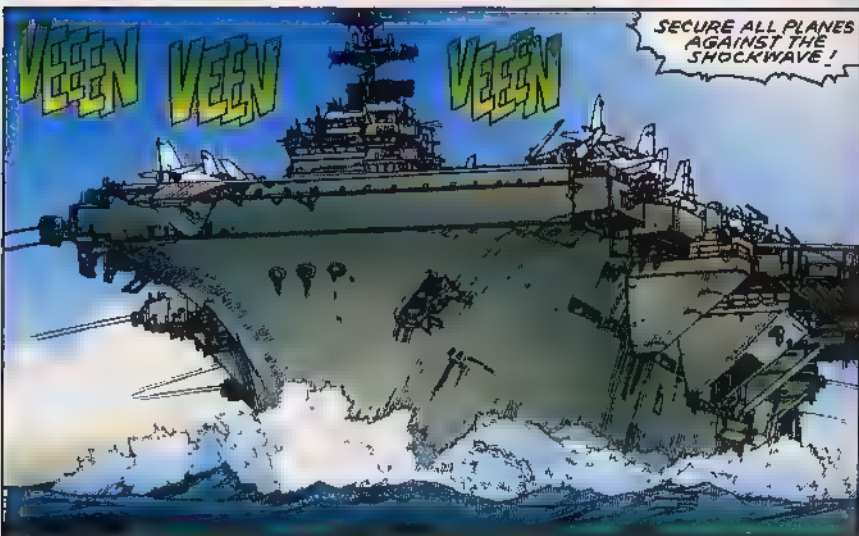


HARD  
STARBOARD!



VEEN VEEEN VEEEN

SECURE ALL PLANES  
AGAINST THE  
SHOCKWAVE!





THERE'S  
A TSUNAMI  
APPROACHING  
THE SHIP!

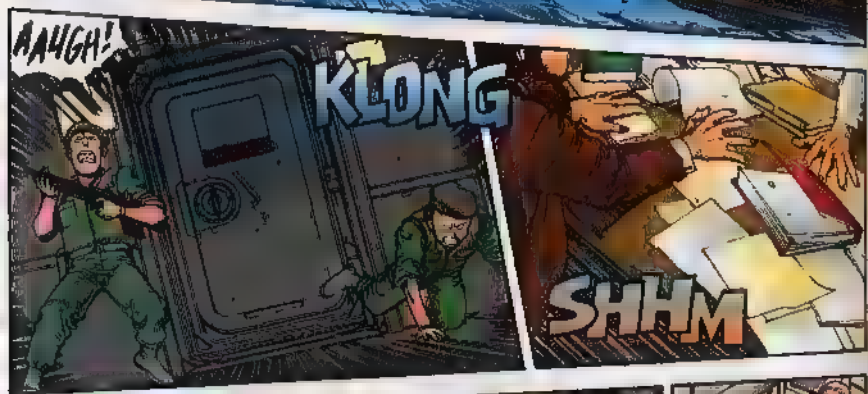
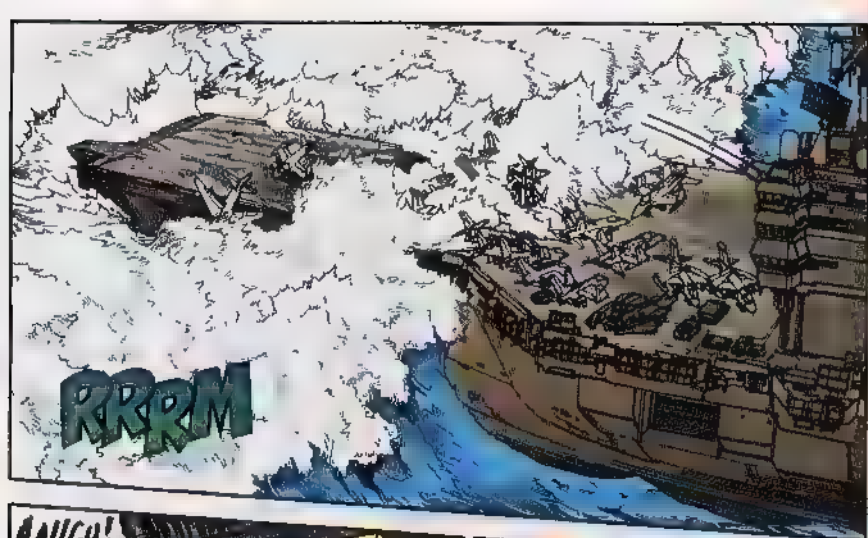
ALL  
PLANES MUST  
BE SECURED  
BEFORE THE  
SHOCKWAVE  
HITS!

VEE VEE VEE

VEE VEE

drum

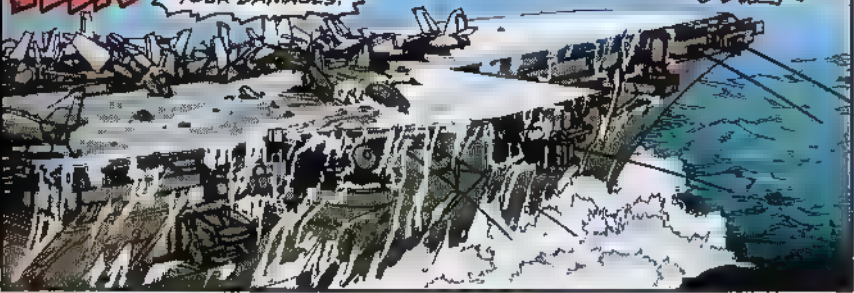
RRRM



# VEEN

LIFT THE RED  
ALERT! ALL  
SECTIONS REPORT  
YOUR DAMAGES.

REPEAT! CANCEL  
THE RED  
ALERT!



IS EVERYONE  
ALL RIGHT?

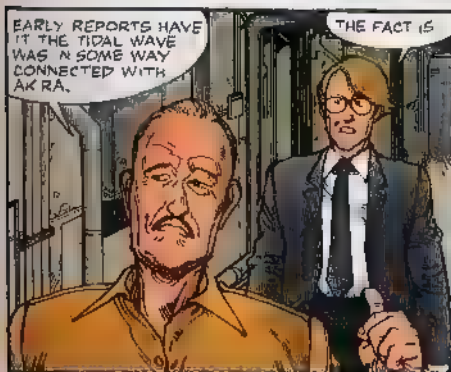


WE'RE FINE,  
ADMIRAL.



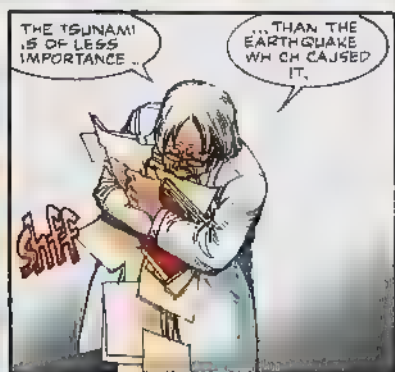
I HAVEN'T BEEN  
SURFING SINCE I  
WAS IN HIGH  
SCHOOL.

OF COURSE, THE  
BOARD--AND THE WAVES  
--WERE A LITTLE  
SMALLER BACK  
THEN.



EARLY REPORTS HAVE  
IT THE TIDAL WAVE  
WAS IN SOME WAY  
CONNECTED WITH  
AK RA.

THE FACT IS



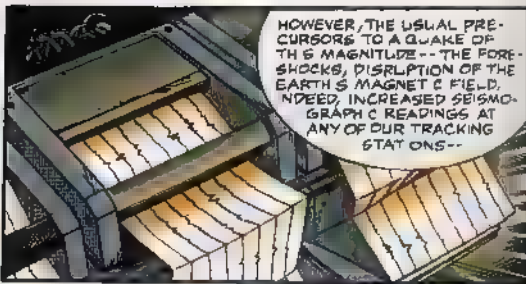
THE TSUNAMI  
IS OF LESS  
IMPORTANCE.

... THAN THE  
EARTHQUAKE  
WHICH CAUSED  
IT.

THE SEISMIC FOCUS WAS 300 KILOMETERS BELOW NEO-TOKYO'S SURFACE SHOCKWAVES MEASURE 8.5 ON THE RICHTER SCALE, INDICATING THAT THIS WAS A GIGANTIC QUAKE.



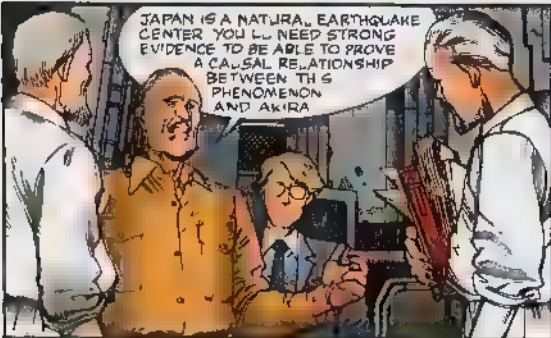
HOWEVER, THE USUAL PRECURSORS TO A QUAKE OF THIS MAGNITUDE -- THE FORESHOCKS, DISRUPTION OF THE EARTH'S MAGNETIC FIELD, INCREASED SEISMOGRAPHIC READINGS AT ANY OF OUR TRACKING STATIONS --



WERE ALL COMPLETELY ABSENT THIS WAS NOT THE RESULT OF NATURAL STRESSES WITHIN A TECTONIC PLATE. A HUMAN AGENT MAY HAVE BEEN THE CAUSE... OR AN EXPERIMENT GONE AWRY.



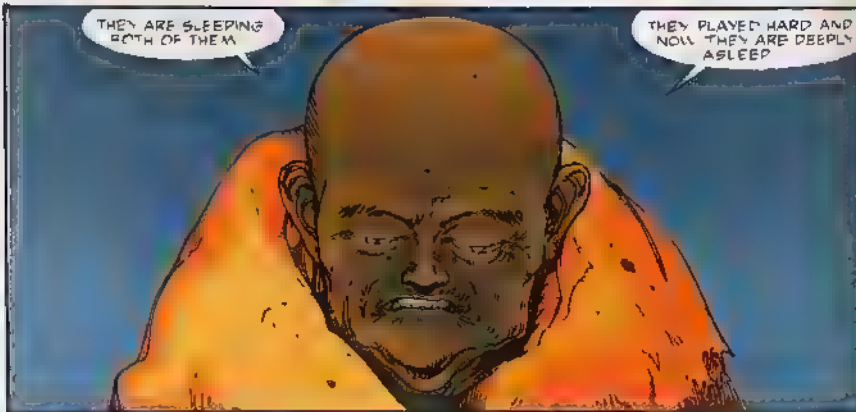
JAPAN IS A NATURAL EARTHQUAKE CENTER YOU'LL NEED STRONG EVIDENCE TO BE ABLE TO PROVE A CAUSAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THIS PHENOMENON AND AKIRA



WHAT'S YOUR OPINION KARMA TANG?



THEY ARE SLEEPING BOTH OF THEM



THEY PLAYED HARD AND NOW THEY ARE DEEPLY ASLEEP



YOU STILL HAVEN'T SAID IF YOU'LL GRANT ME THIS FAVOR

I KNOW YOU'RE CONCERNED FOR HER TOO

SURE I AM

BUT I NEED A FAVOR, TOO!

NAME IT

I'M IN DEBT, AND THAT MEANS TROUBLE!

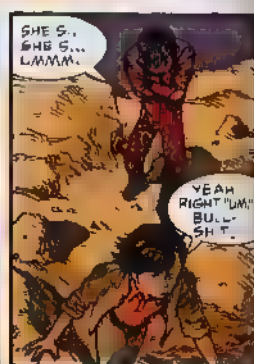
HEH-HEH-HEH!

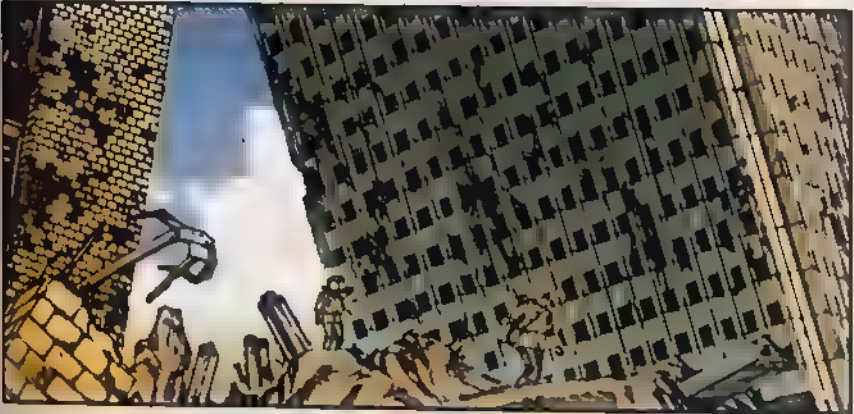
LIKE YOU SAID, SHE'S LADY BOUNTIFUL

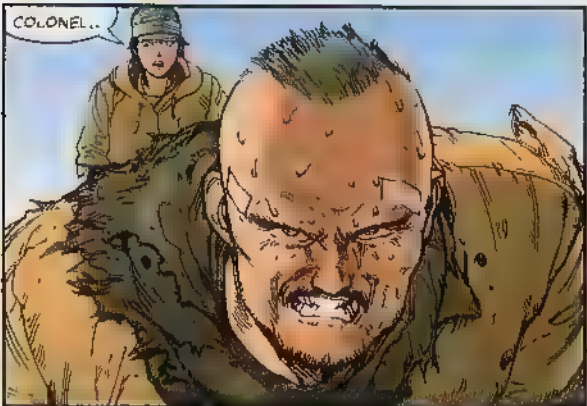
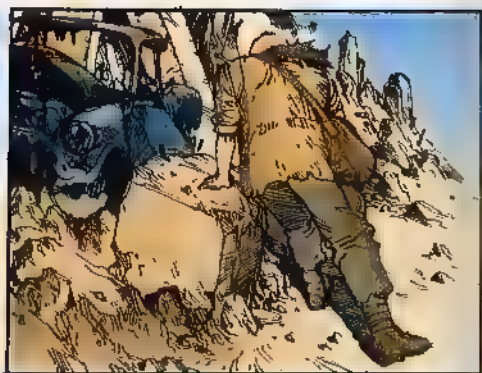
I WAS SWEATING BUCKETS

YOU PROMISED TO LOOK FOR KAY

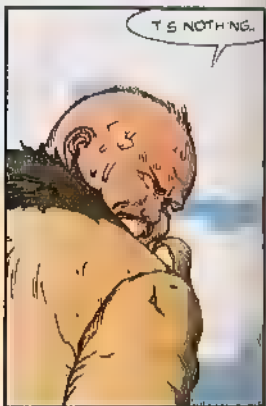
BUT WHERE?







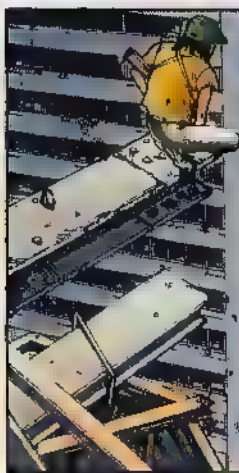
COLONEL..



T'S NOTHING..



WE'RE  
A MOST  
THERE





KANEDAA!



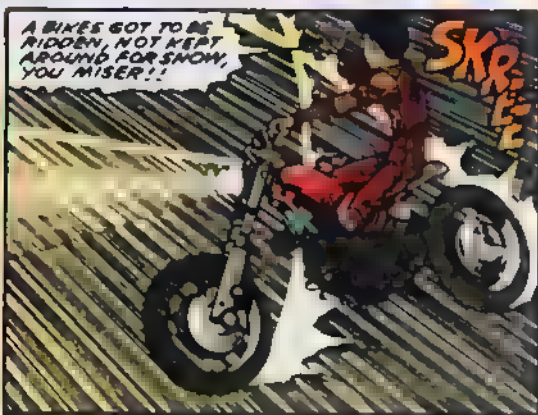
DRRRN



THAT BIKE'S NOT FOR SALE AT ANY PRICE!



A BIKE'S GOT TO BE RIDDEN, NOT KEPT AROUND FOR SHOW, YOU MISER!!



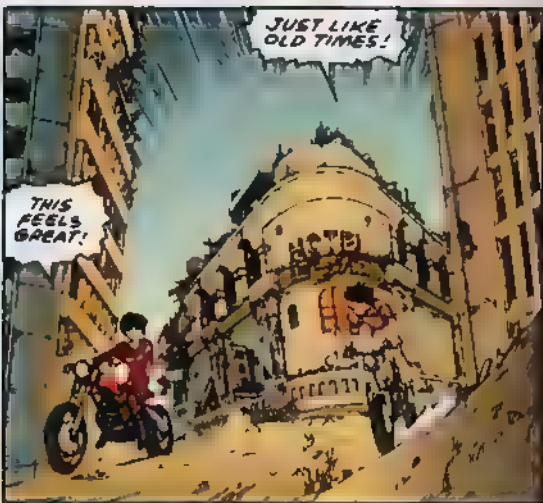
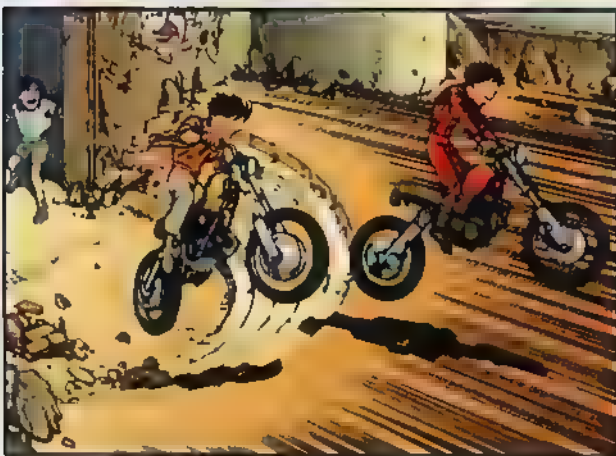
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MOTORCYCLE COST ME?

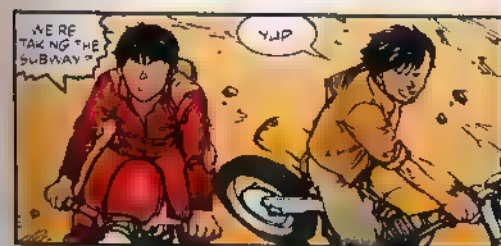
HEY!

GANGWAY!

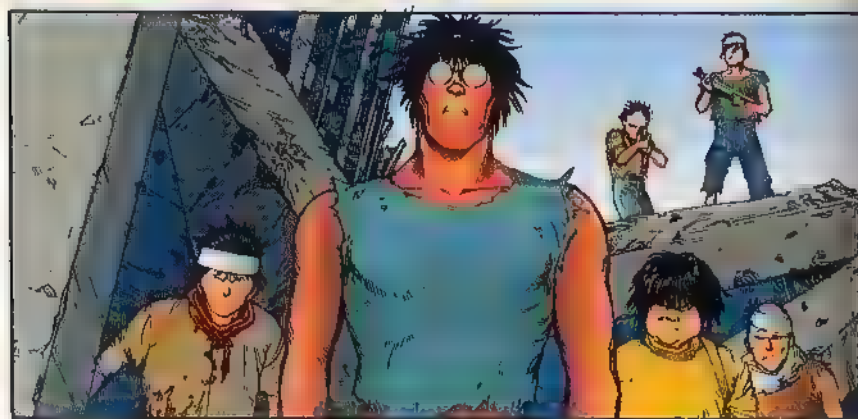
DRN

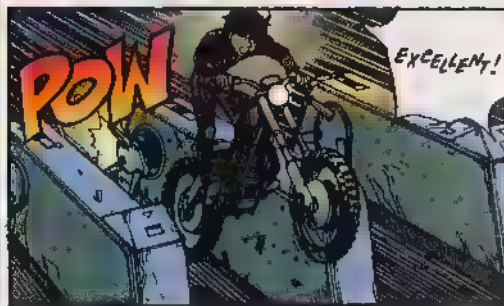
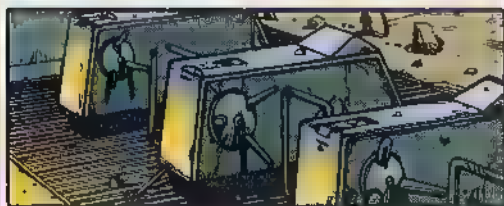
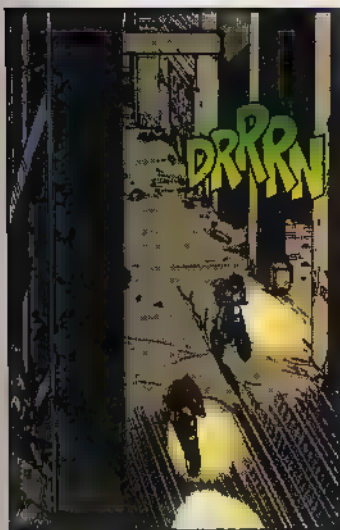
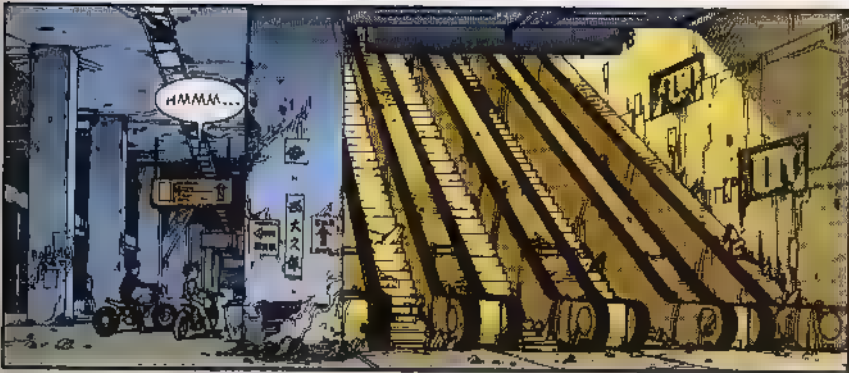


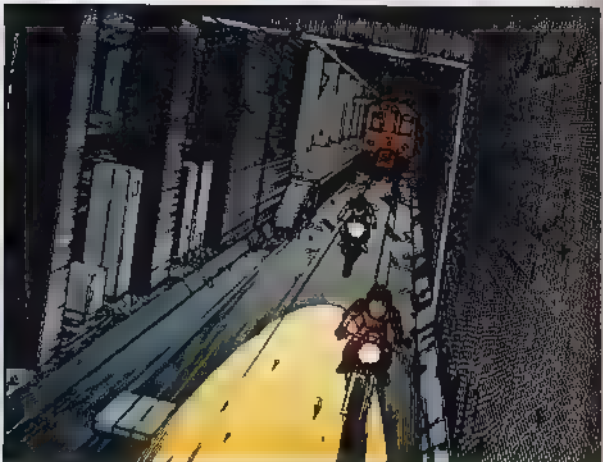
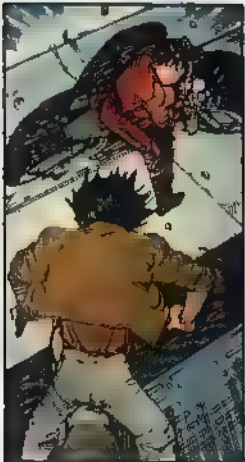
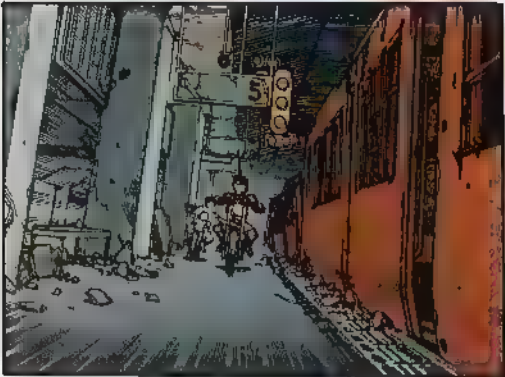
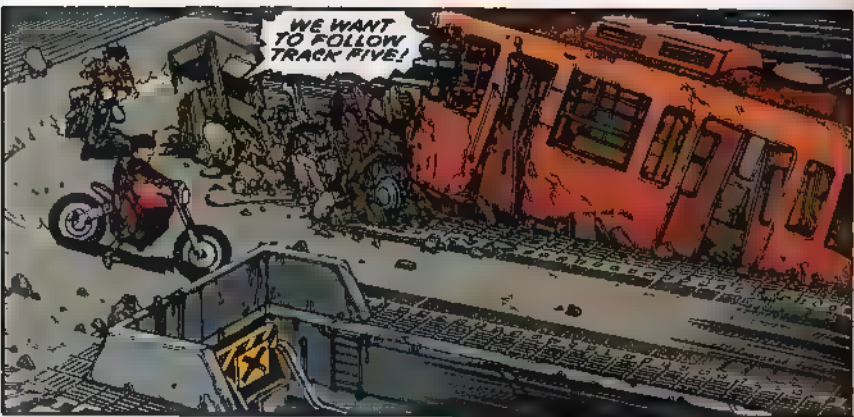




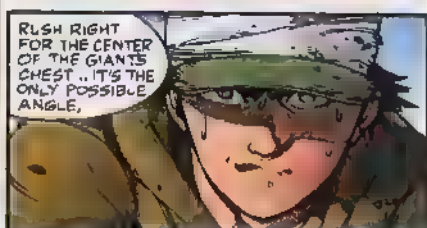
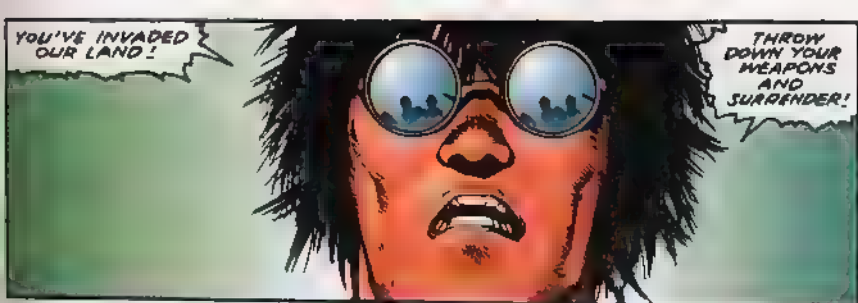


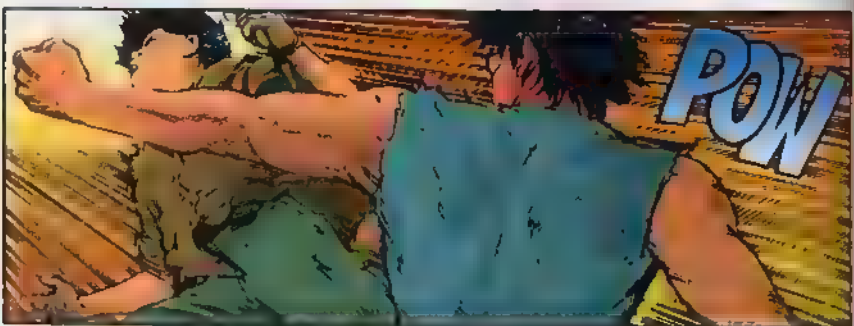
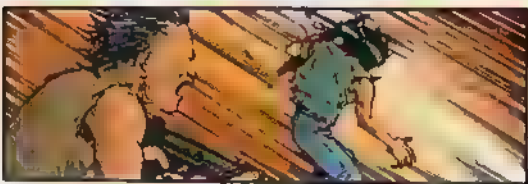
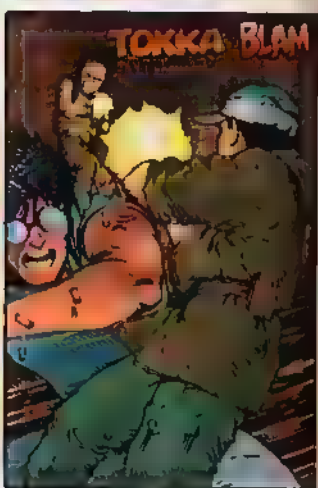
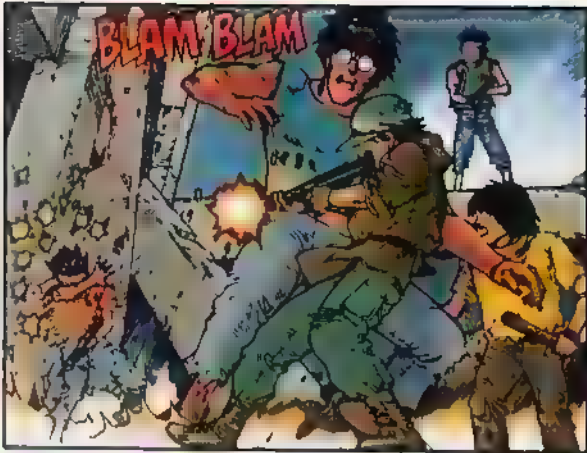


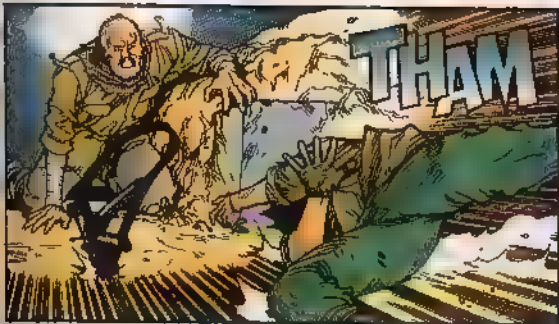




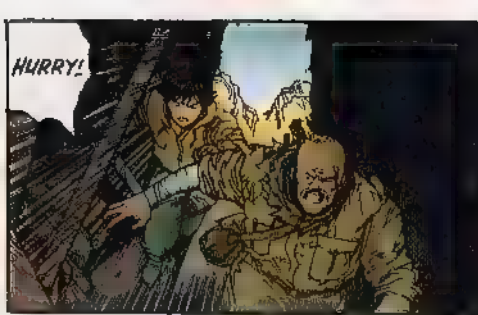


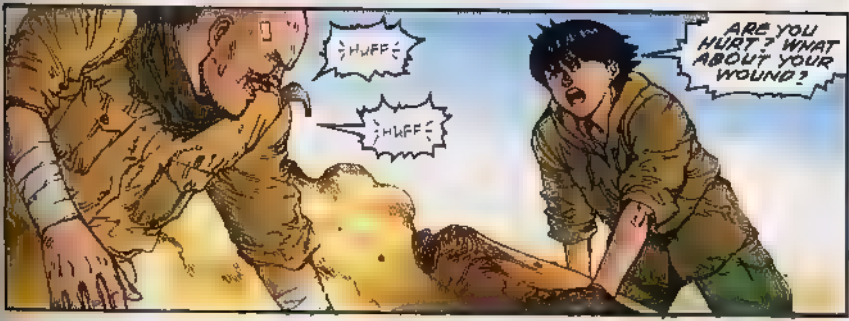
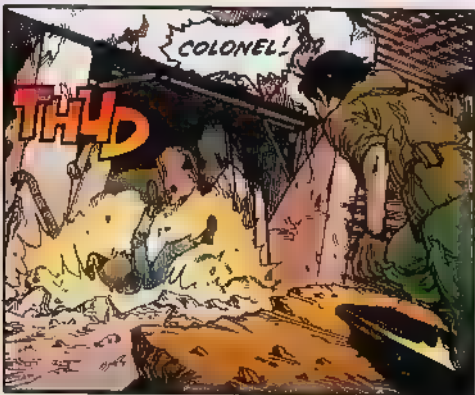


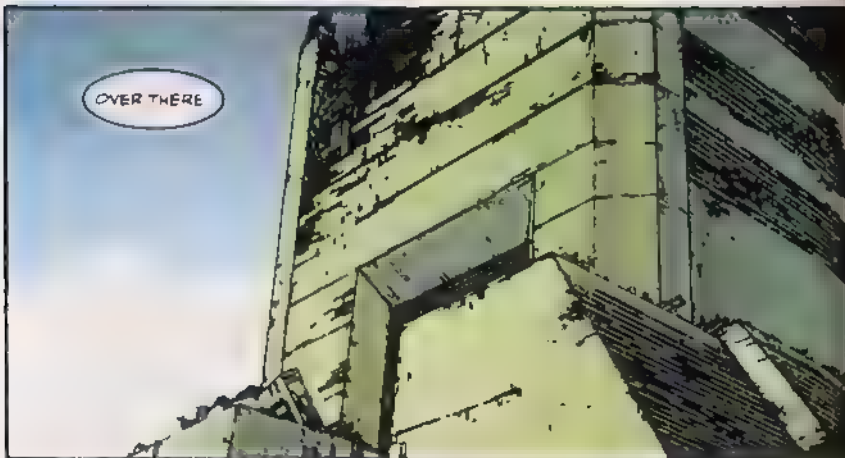
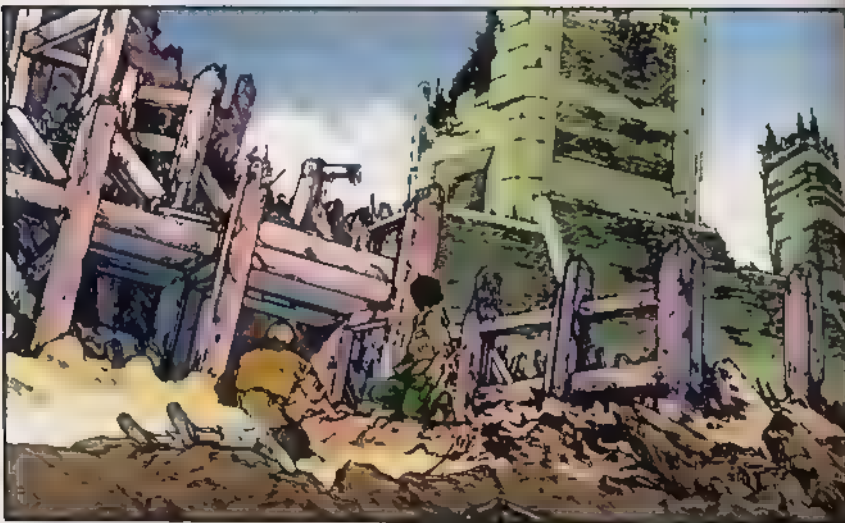




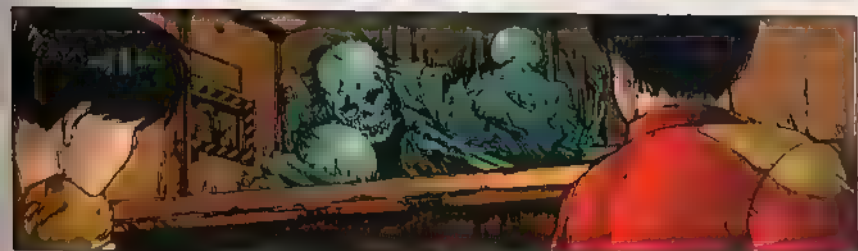


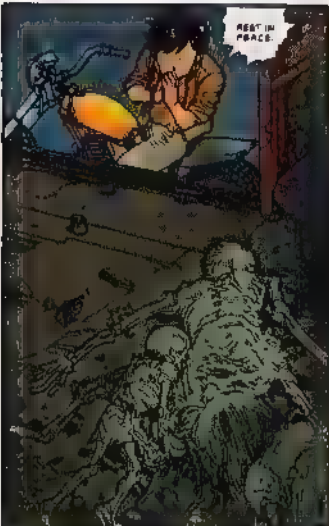












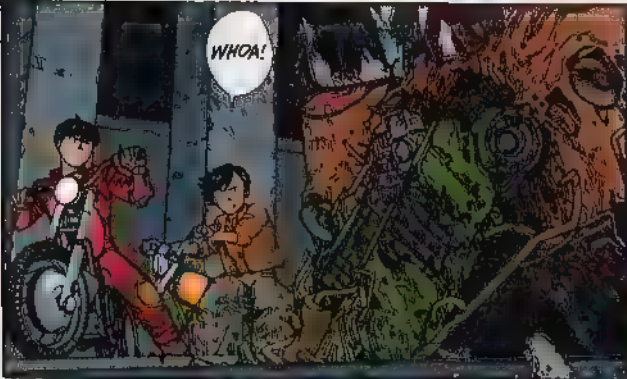
REST IN  
PEACE.



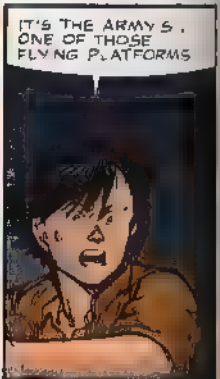
HEY!  
C'MERE  
AND  
TAKE A  
LOOK



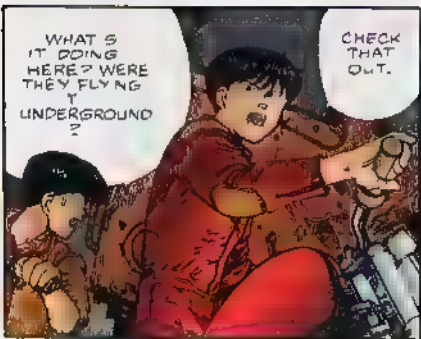
WHAT,  
DID  
YOU FIND  
SOMEONE  
YOU  
KNOW?



WHOA!



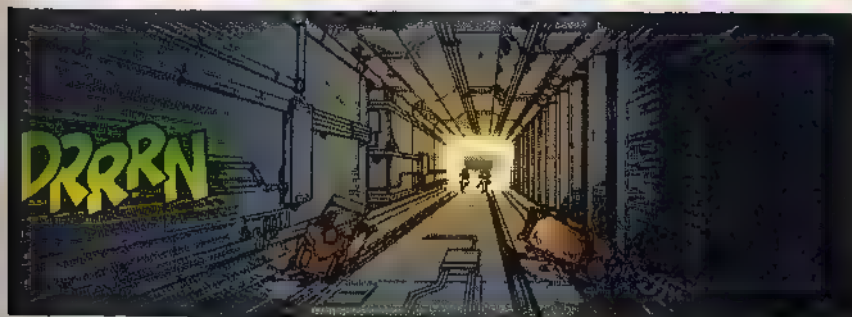
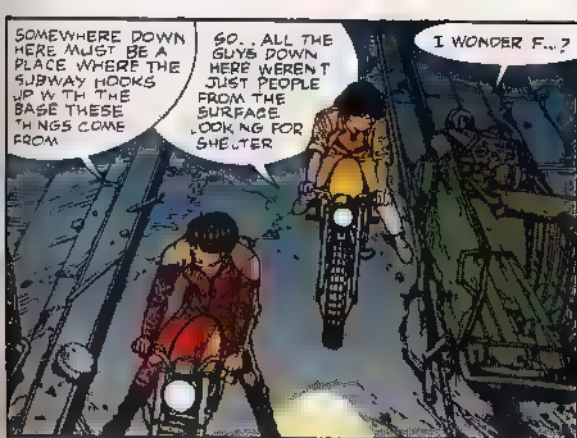
IT'S THE ARMY'S .  
ONE OF THOSE  
FLYING PLATFORMS



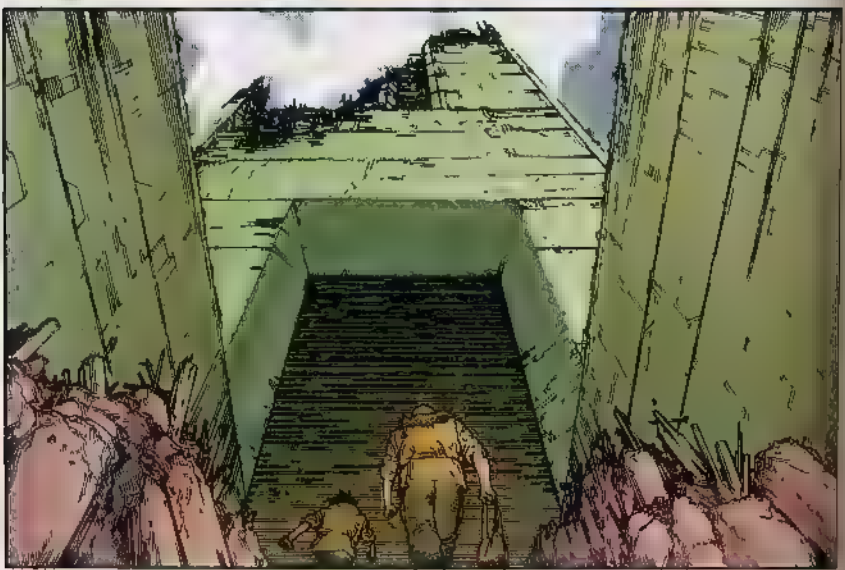
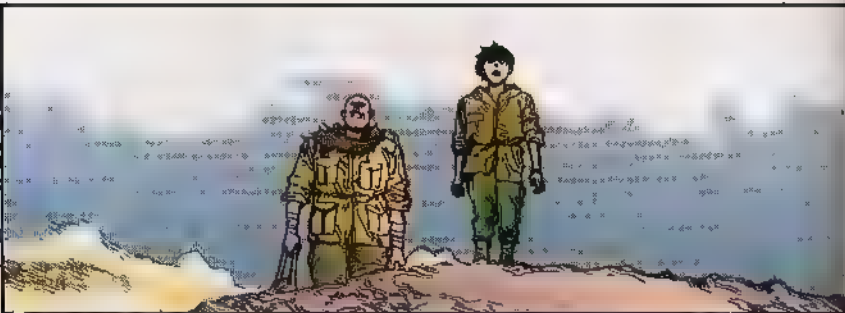
WHAT'S  
IT DOING  
HERE? WERE  
THEY FLYING  
UNDERGROUND?

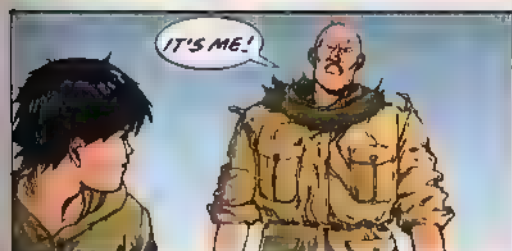
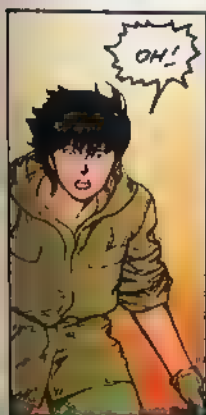
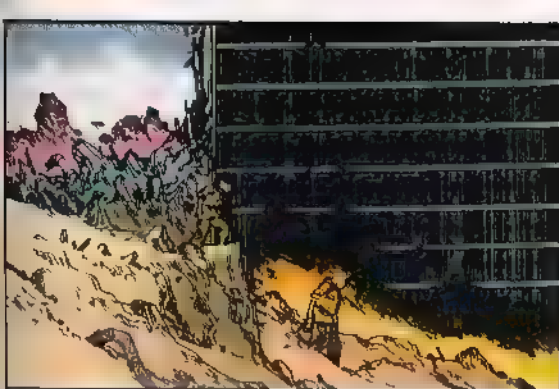
CHECK  
THAT  
OUT.











YOU'VE GOT  
T VERY WELL-  
TRA NED



IT'S EQUIPPED  
WITH A VOICE-PRNT  
RESPONSE  
MECHANISM



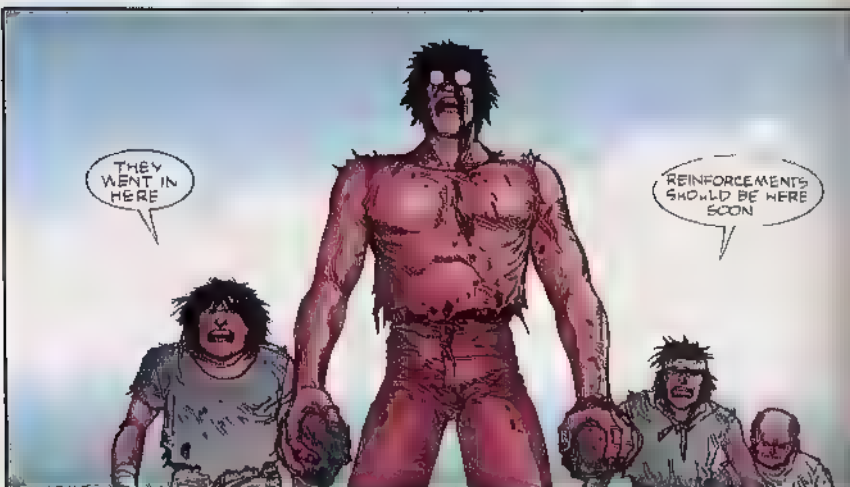
LET'S  
HURRY



SKUFF

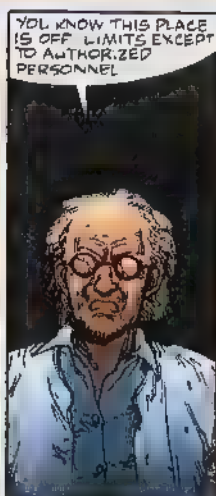
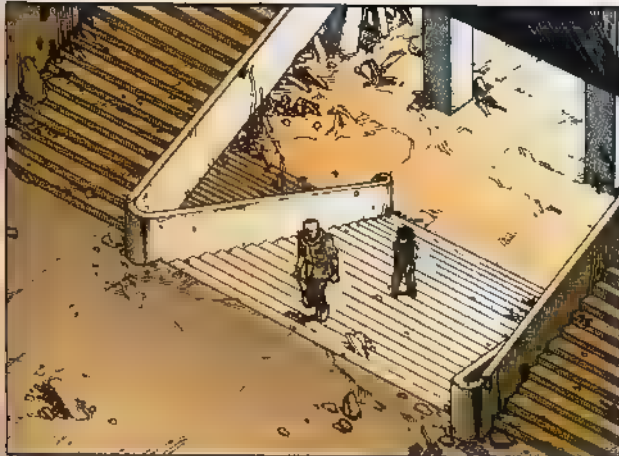


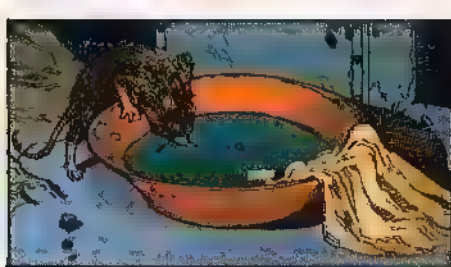
THEY  
WENT IN  
HERE

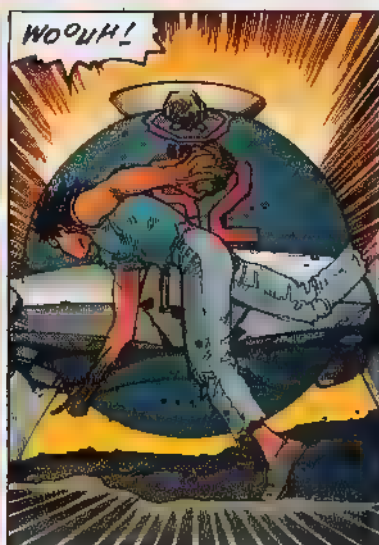


REINFORCEMENTS  
SHOULD BE HERE  
SOON

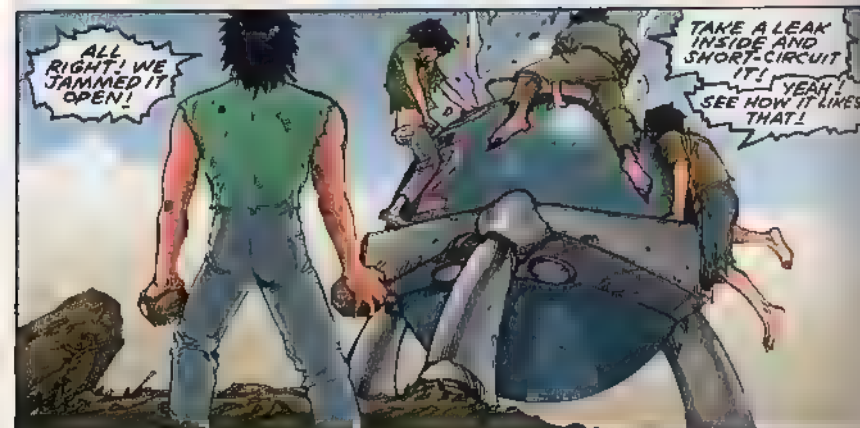
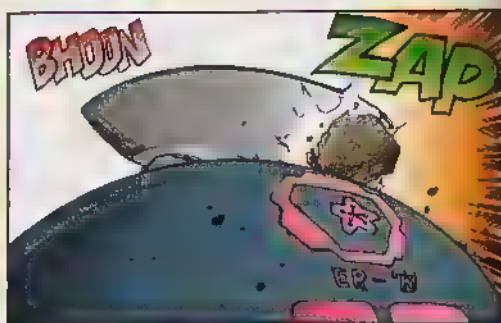














**DRRRR**



ARE YOU GONNA JUST KEEP  
GOING TILL WE DROWN?

THE WATER  
DOESN'T GET  
ANY DEEPER  
THAN THIS!



WHAT IS  
THAT?

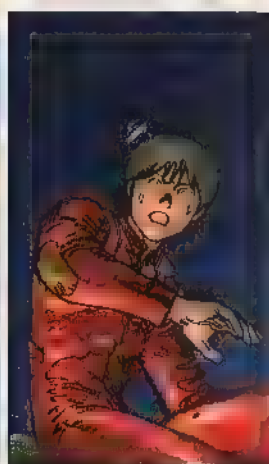
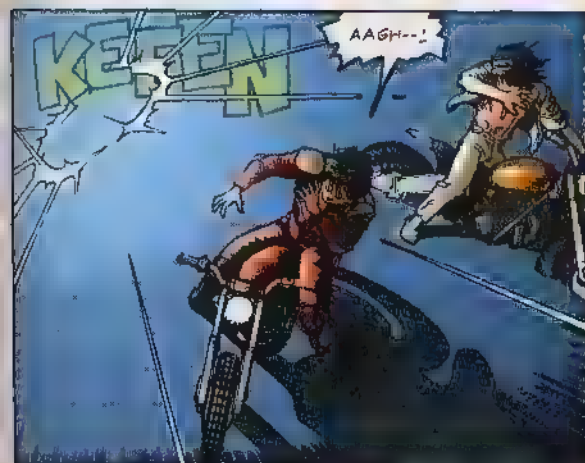
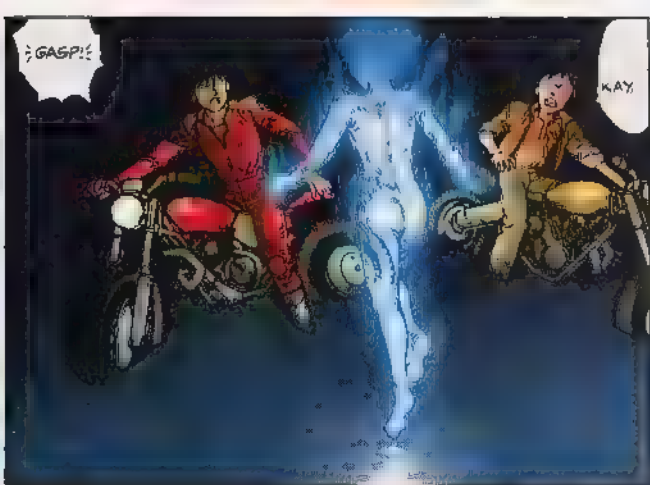
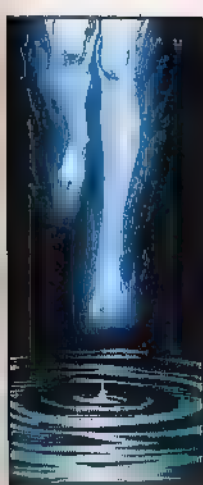


HUNH?




KAY?!?











YOU SAW IT,  
TOO, DIDN'T  
YOU? IT WAS  
KAY, RIGHT?



SHE WALKED  
RIGHT THROUGH  
YOU



HOW FAR ARE  
WE FROM THE  
EXIT?

CLOSE



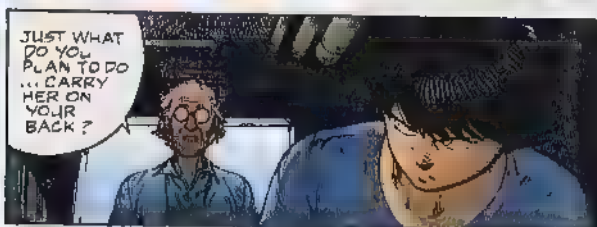
THEN  
LET'S  
GO

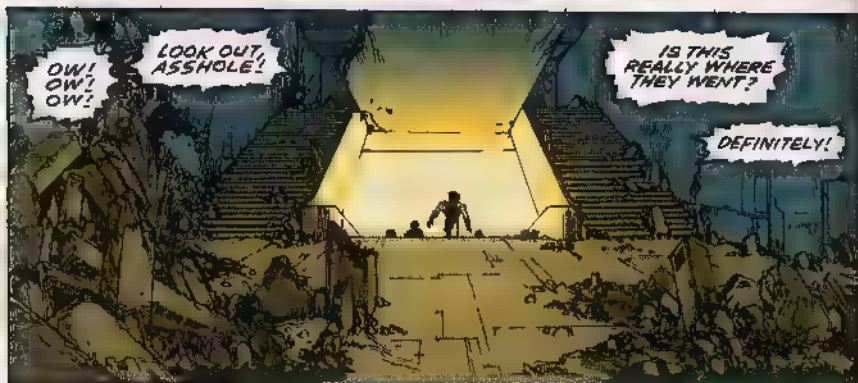
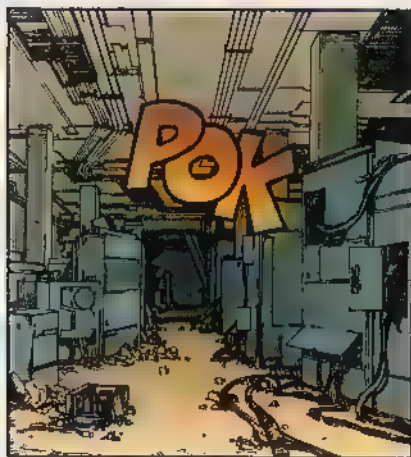
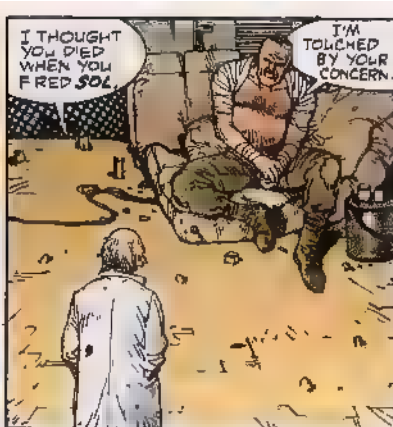


**DRRN**

I HOPE  
NOTHING  
BAD'S  
HAPPENED  
TO HER.

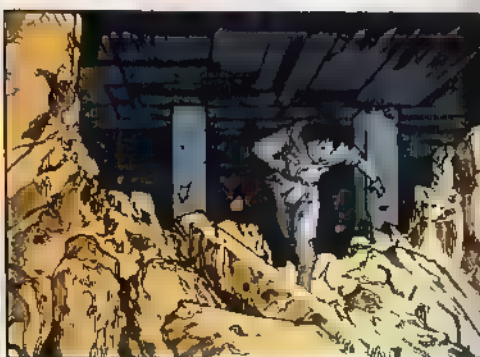
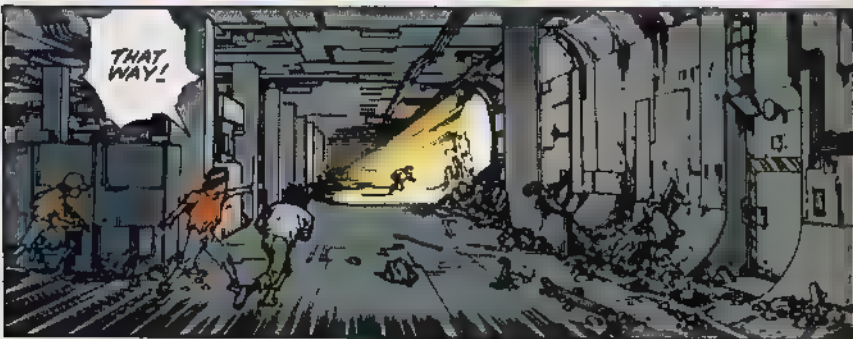
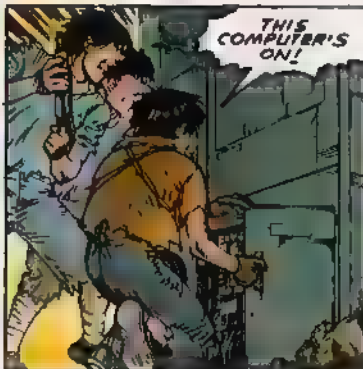
WE'LL SEE  
SOON  
ENOUGH.

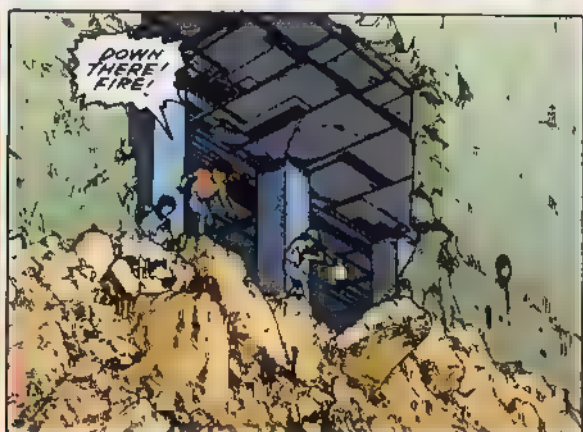
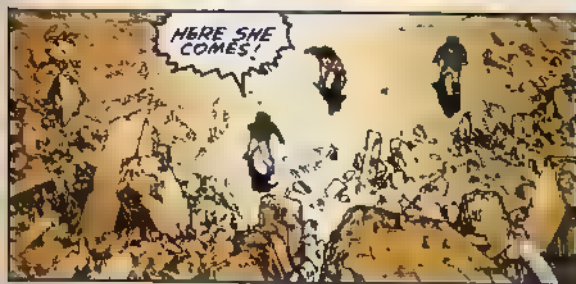


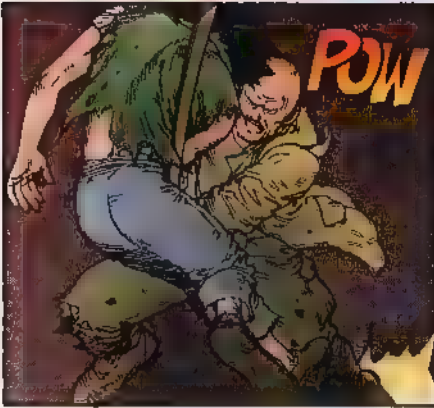


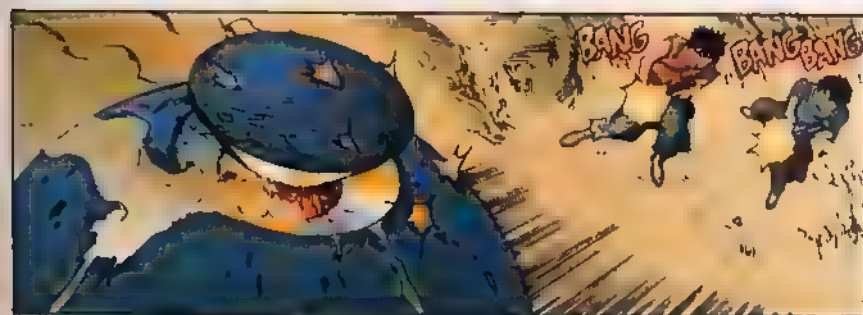
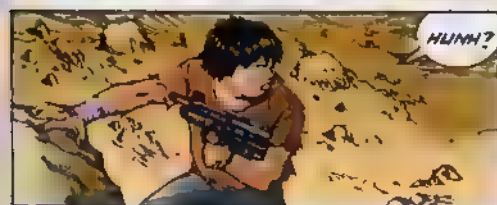




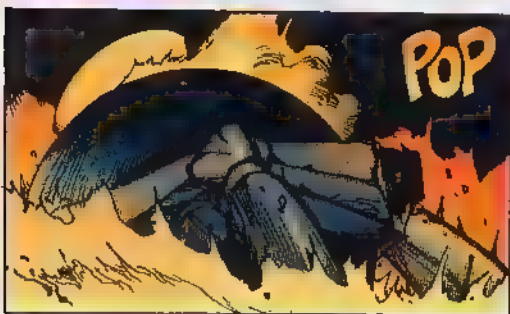
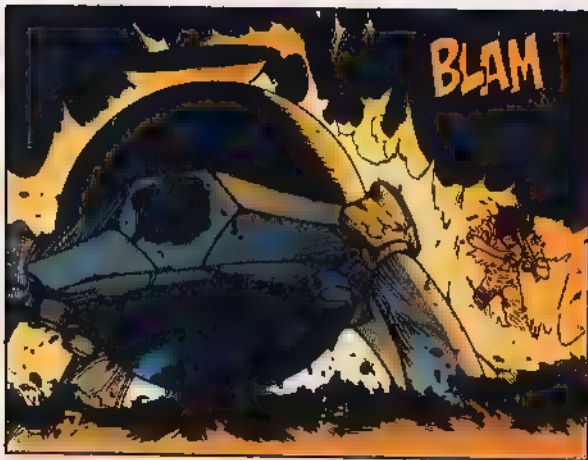








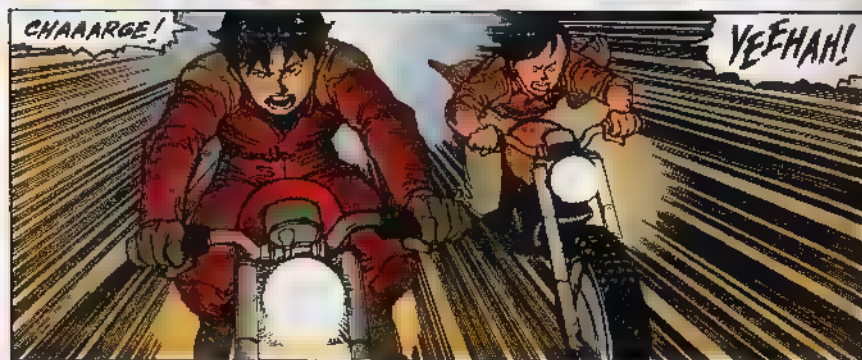




THAT'S  
THE EXIT, DEAD  
AHEAD!

SKREEE

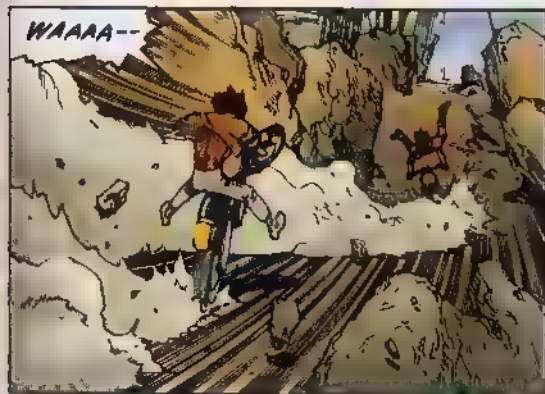
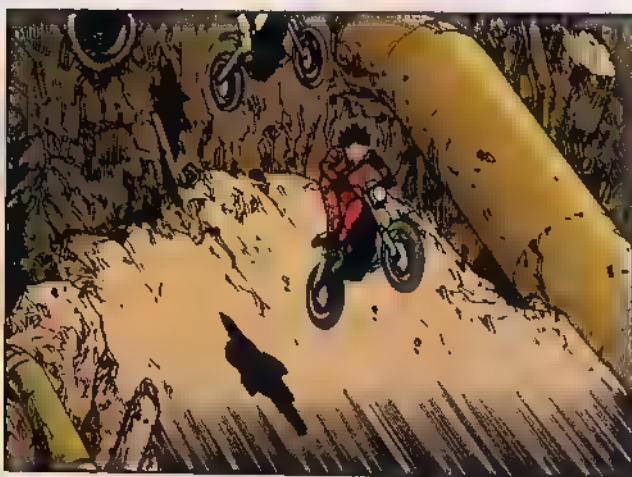
OOOPS!





OH--!

BOP

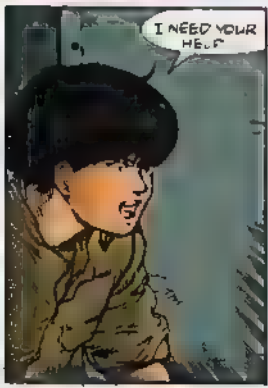


--AAA--

--AAA--

--HAH!!







NEXT ISSUE: **ASSASSINATION CORPS!**

Upcoming **AKIRA** dates include:

**ANN ARBOR, MI**  
**MICHIGAN THEATER**

September 28-30

**INDIANAPOLIS, IN**  
**IRVING THEATER**  
September 28-October 4

**TEMPE, AZ**  
**VALLEY ART THEATER**  
October 12-18

**EUGENE, OR**  
**BIJOU THEATER**  
October 12-18

**NEW YORK, NY**  
**THE NEW FILM FORUM**  
begins October 18

**PROVIDENCE, RI**  
**AVON CINEMA**  
November 30-December 6

**RHINEBECK, NY**  
**UPSTATE THEATER**  
October 26-November 1

**ATHENS, GA**  
**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**  
October 26-27

**HONOLULU, HI**  
**ACADEMY THEATER**  
October 27-28

**CHARLESTON, WV**  
**CAPITAL PLAZA MUSIC HALL**  
October 30

**LOS ANGELES AREA**  
**MONTCLAIR, CA**  
**GENERAL CINEMA**  
November 3-4

**LANSING, MI**  
**ODEON THEATER**  
November 2-8

**MIAMI, FL**  
**BEAUMONT THEATER**  
November 8-15

**ALBUQUERQUE, NM**  
**SUB THEATER at the UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO**  
November 15-17

**PHILADELPHIA, PA**  
**ROXY SCREENING ROOM**  
December 7-19

**DETROIT, MI**  
**DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS**  
December 14-16

Also, check your local specialty or art theater listings for the **AKIRA** playdates nearest you.





**KATSUHIRO OTOMO**

writer/illustrator

**YASUMITSU SUETAKE**

chief assistant to Mr. Otomo

**MAKOTO SHIOSAKI**

**SATOSHI TAKABATAKE**

assistants to Mr. Otomo

**HIROSHI HIRATA**

designer • AKIRA calligraphy

**AKIRA SAITO**

designer • Kodansha edition

Kodansha Ltd

**YOKO UMEZAWA**

with **LINDA M. YORK**

translation

**KOICHI YURI**

editor • Kodansha edition

**YUKA ANDO**

editorial coordinator • Tokyo

**NORIYUKI OKAZAKI**

managing editor • New York

**Epic Comics**

**JO DUFFY**

english adaptation

**STEVE OLIFF**

with the

**OLYOPTICS COMPUTER CREW**

colorists

**MICHAEL HIGGINS**

letterer

**MARIE JAVINS**

managing editor

**MARCUS MCLAURIN**

editor

**CARL POTTS**

executive editor



It begins with the sudden and mysterious quake that rocks Tokyo, the very Earth turning betrayer in a display of bullying might. It grows in a sweep of passion, sending Kay on a dangerous search for Chiyoko, with Kaneda in a no less harrowing pursuit of Kay. And it thunders out of control in the madness that drives a giant's blood soaked rampage.

They are all natural forces at play in the city this day, roiling and unpredictable powers battering the survivors from without and within. And like all natural forces, these are destined to run their course . . . and when they have, who can say what will remain?

KATSUHIRO OTOMO'S

AKIRA

